

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05169 012112Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04
SIL-01 AGRE-00 STR-07 TRSE-00 /112 W
-----040885 012153Z /41

P R 011943Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8300
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
USSOUTHCOM
AMCONSUL BARRANQUILLA POUCH
AMCONSUL CALI POUCH
AMCONSUL MEDELLIN POUCH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BOGOTA 5169

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, CO
SUBJ: POLITICAL SUMMARIES: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA

1. SUMMARY. DESPITE INCREASED CONSERVATIVE OPTIMISM OVER THE PARTY'S CHANCES OF WINNING SUNDAY'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, THE LIBERALS PROBABLY WILL WIN ANOTHER FOUR-YEAR LEASE ON THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. AS THE ELECTION APPROACHES, LABOR TENSIONS HAVE EASED AND THE ECONOMY LOOKS PROMISING. THE NEPHEW OF THE LIBERAL PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE REPORTEDLY HAS FOLLOWED THROUGH WITH HIS THREAT TO SUE THE CBS TELEVISION NETWORK. STUDENT VIOLENCE LED TO THE DEATH OF ONE YOUTH WHICH, COMBINED WITH THE UNRELATED KIDNAPPING OF A COLOMBIAN EXECUTIVE OF TEXACO, HAS SUSTAINED AN UNEASY ATMOSPHERE IN THE NATION'S MAJOR CITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. ELECTION FORECAST. IN THE FINAL DAYS BEFORE THE JUNE 4 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION THE POLITICAL MOOD IN COLOMBIA HAS SHIFTED. CONSERVATIVES PROFESS, AT LEAST OUTWARDLY, CONFIDENCE THAT THEIR
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 05169 012112Z

CANDIDATE WILL WIN. IN SO DOING, THEY MAY HAVE UNINTENTIONALLY PERFORMED A SERVICE FOR THE IR LIBERAL OPPONENTS BY JARRING THEM OUT OF THEIR COMPLACENCY. THE LIBERALS ARE RUNNING SCARED, LOUDLY BEATING THE DRUMS OF PARTY LOYALTY AND WAVING THE BUGABOO OF A POSSIBLE CONSERVATIVE VICTORY. THE EMBASSY STANDS BY ITS EARLIER ESTIMATE OF A 300-500,000 TURBAY VOTE MARGIN OVER BETANCUR. (BOGOTA 5168).

3. LABOR TENSIONS EASE FOR ELECTIONS. WHILE STUDENT UNREST CONTINUES (SEE PARA. 6), AGITATION BY ORGANIZED LABOR SEEMS TO BE IN RECESS AS THE NATION PREPARES FOR THE JUNE 4 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. AN ATTEMPT BY DISSIDENT GOVERNMENT WORKERS TO STAGE A TWO-DAY WORK STOPPAGE FAILED DUE TO LACK OF SUPPORT (BOGOTA 5002). THE MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS, MEANWHILE, ARE CONTINUING HIGH-LEVEL TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN AN ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE AT LEAST SOME OF LABOR'S MOST PRESSING COMPLAINTS.

4. THE ECONOMY AS COLOMBIA APPROACHES THE ELECTIONS. BOTH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES MUST BE EYEING THE ECONOMY WITH CONSIDERABLE ANTICIPATION AS THEY GO INTO SUNDAY'S ELECTIONS. INTERNATIONAL RESERVES HAVE NEVER BEEN HIGHER. INFLATION CONTINUES TO DROP. ABUNDANT AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT WILL KEEP DOWNWARD PRESSURE ON PRICES, AND TIGHTER THAN AVERAGE MONETARY MANAGEMENT WILL PRESENT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WITH A FAVORABLE PRICE OUTLOOK DURING ITS FIRST FEW MONTHS IN OFFICE. GOVERNMENT REVENUES IN THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF THE YEAR WERE RUNNING AHEAD OF 1977 BY OVER 32 PERCENT. PERHAPS POLITICALLY MOST ATTRACTIVE OF ALL WOULD BE A FALL IN WORLD COFFEE PRICES IN JULY OR AUGUST. THE NEW GOVERNMENT COULD PUBLICLY LAMENT ITS BAD LUCK AND TALK AUSTERITY, BUT THE REDUCED PRESSURE ON ITS INTERNATIONAL RESERVES WOULD ALLOW A FREEING OF THE ECONOMY, A MORE RAPID CRAWL OF THE ESCHANGE PEG, INCREASED FOREIGN BORROWING, AND INVESTMENT. IN GENERAL, LOWER COFFEE PRICES WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR COLOMBIA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 05169 012112Z

TO REACH MORE RAPID RATES OF GROWTH OF EMPLOYMENT, OUTPUT, AND MINOR EXPORTS.

5. TURBAY'S NEPHEW SUES CBS. ACCORDING TO A PRESS REPORT, THE AMERICAN LAWYER REPRESENTING ANIBAL TURBAY, THE NEPHEW OF THE LIBERAL PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, HAS FILED SUIT IN A NEW YORK COURT AGAINST THE CBS TELEVISION NETWORK AND ITS CORRESPONDENT, MORLEY SAFER (BOGOTA 4524). THE LEGAL ACTION, WHICH ASKS FOR \$2 MILLION IN GENERAL AND \$10 MILLION IN PUNITIVE DAMAGES, WAS PROMPTED BY ALLEGATIONS IN THE CBS SIXTY-MINUTES PROGRAM THAT ANIBAL TURBAY WAS INVOLVED WITH DRUG TRAFFICKERS WHO HOPED TO USE THIS RELATIONSHIP TO GAIN INFLUENCE IN THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT.

6. STUDENT KILLED IN DISORDERS. STUDENTS CONTINUED TO DISRUPT THE PUBLIC ORDER IN SEVERAL OF COLOMBIA'S MAJOR CITIES, INCLUDING BOGOTA, MEDELLIN, BARRANQUILLA AND CALI. THE MOST SERIOUS INCIDENT OCCURRED IN BOGOTA ON MAY 31 WHEN A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UN) STUDENT DIED OF GUNSHOT WOUNDS DURING A CLASH BETWEEN UN STUDENTS AND POLICE. THE VICTIM WAS BURIED PEACEFULLY THE NEXT DAY BY HIS FELLOW STUDENTS FOLLOWING A TENSE NIGHT DURING WHICH HEAVILY-ARMED SECURITY FORCES PATROLLED THE MOST VOLATILE AREAS OF THE CITY. CLASSES AT THE UN IN BOGOTA AND UN BRANCHES

IN OTHER CITIES WHERE DISTURBANCES HAVE OCCURRED HAVE BEEN
SUSPENDED UNTIL JUNE 12. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE PORTRAYED
THE STUDENT DISTURBANCES AS AN EFFORT BY EXTREMISTS TO DISRUPT THE
JUNE 4 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, WHICH THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO
PROMISE WILL BE PEACEFUL. ADDING TO THE TENSE ATMOSPHERE WAS THE
MAY 29 KIDNAPPING OF THE COLOMBIAN GENERAL MANAGER OF TEXACO,
JUAN NICOLAS ESCOBAR SOTO, WHOSE ABDUCTORS HAVE APPARENTLY MADE
A LARGE RANSOM DEMAND (BOGOTA 5074).
ASENCIO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BOGOTA05169
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780230-0064
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197806109/aaaadpoi.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a6acc97d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2167796
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL SUMMARIES: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA
TAGS: PINT, CO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a6acc97d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014